

0395

~~Top Secret~~



6.2(d)

→ **CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Restiveness Growing**

Cracks are beginning to appear in the Czechoslovak regime's monolithic facade. Prague's crackdown on the protest last Saturday provoked a rare display of dissent from the Communist youth daily, which characterized the demonstrators as peaceful. The head of the traditionally subservient Socialist Party had publicly rebuked regime authorities earlier for suppressing demonstrations.

3.3(b)(1)

his party will seek real independence. Some rank-and-file Socialists have adopted a more ambitious program, including support for a constitutional amendment mandating an "open" multiparty system. Last month, 70 regional representatives of the Czechoslovak People's Party demanded their leaders resign, accusing them of blocking positive changes.

6.2(d)

**Comment:** The usually docile National Front parties have almost certainly surprised the regime with their signs of independence. Despite its talk of democratization, Prague probably expected them to remain subordinate as Communist-controlled vehicles for winning over public opinion. On its own, this show of unrest will not threaten the regime of Communist leader Milos Jakes, but it risks encouraging more open demands for change from a disgruntled public and probably will further unnerve a leadership acutely aware of its unpopularity.

6.2(d)



NR Record

~~Top Secret~~  
TCS 2956/89  
3 November 1989

0394

~~Top Secret~~

[Redacted]

6.2(d)

---

### Czechoslovakia's National Front

Czechoslovakia's four legal non-Communist parties operate within the National Front, an umbrella organization that also includes the ruling Communists and such mass organizations as trade unions and women's groups. The regime has maintained the Front organizations in large part to pass on and promote Communist Party directives, and they have been careful to adhere to the party line. The Socialist Party has 16,000 members, mostly urban professionals, and the rural-based People's Party claims approximately 50,000 adherents. Both have their own newspapers and publishing houses. There are also two Slovak parties with estimated memberships of less than 1,000 each. Communist Party leader Jakes recently pledged to reactivate the National Front and to upgrade the satellite parties' role in policymaking as the cornerstone of his limited political reforms.

[Redacted]

6.2(d)

~~Top Secret~~  
TCS 2956/89  
3 November 1989